



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
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Supporting the Strategic Objectives of the London Syria Conference'- Final Independent Evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries:	<i>Jordan</i>
Final Evaluation:	<i>June 2017</i>
Evaluation Mode:	<i>Independent</i>
Administrative Office:	<i>Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS)</i>
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Project Code:	<i>JOR/16/06/GBR</i>
Donor(s) & Budget:	<i>FCO (US\$ 1,418,733)</i>
Keywords:	<i>Jordan, Syrian refugee crisis, resilience, capacity building, job matching, skills development, recognition of prior learning</i>

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The project funded by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) directly supported the international commitment made in the February 2016 London Conference to assist refugee-hosting countries in the Middle East.

During the London Conference the Government of Jordan signed the 'Jordan Compact' and agreed to boost employment and accommodate the participation of Syrian refugees in the labour market in return for improvements in trade and

investment from the international community. As a direct follow-up to that conference the United Kingdom (UK), as part of its international commitments, pledged to build economic opportunities and create job opportunities for Syrian refugees and vulnerable people in host countries.

In the context of Jordan, ILO's overall strategy has been on the following areas of response to the Syrian refugee crisis:

- Build the resilience of host communities to facilitate access to employment and livelihood opportunities;
- Strengthen institutional capacity and coordination mechanisms at local, regional and national levels to combat unacceptable forms of work, with a focus on child labour;
- Support policy development to ensure an employment-rich national response, embedded in the principles of decent work.

The ILO project, through FCO funding, directly supports the international commitment and ILO's strategy through its three project outputs:

- Output 1: 5,000 beneficiaries (50% Jordanian and 50% Syrian refugees) benefit from job matching and skills development;
- Output 2: An improved regulatory framework will be implemented in a coherent manner across the governorates;
- Output 3: 20 Joint Business Ventures (JBV) between Jordanians and Syrian refugees are

established in the value chains of the two sectors.

Funding was for a sum of GBP 1,082,493.62 (USD 1,418,7330), with an implementation period from the 13th of September 2016 to 31st of March 2017. The original start date of the project was March 2016; however, delays in approval and disbursement held back its commencement.

Main Findings

Relevance

The project directly supports the Government of Jordan's Compact aiming to facilitate Syrian refugee participation in the labour market to contribute to Jordan's economic growth, creating 200,000 job opportunities for Syrian refugees in exchange for improved access to European markets and increased investments and soft loans. The programme also gives direct support to the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) and the Jordan Response Plan (JRP) to the Syria Crisis, which calls for collective action to provide better economic, financial and job opportunities for Syrian refugees and vulnerable Jordanians.

The interventions funded under FCO support the ILO's Decent Work Agenda and its Programme of Support to the Jordan Compact: A Resilient Labour Market to Drive Inclusive Economic Growth for All, updated in August 2016.

Validity of the design

The timeframe of 6.5 months for implementation is considered too short. The nature of the interventions requires a longer-term perspective and it is therefore recommended that multi-year commitments linked to achievement of annual milestones be considered. It is also recommended that ILO ensures further expansion does not take place too quickly and that what has been implemented so far is sustained, at the community and policy level.

Effectiveness

One year after the February London Conference, good progress has been made by the Government of Jordan to facilitate access by Syrian workers to the Jordanian labour market. This includes 39,291 permits issued to Syrian refugees by February 2017, up from around 4,000 at the time of the London Conference.

Output 1: 5,000 beneficiaries (50% Jordanian and 50% Syrian refugees) benefit from job matching and skills development.

Access to agricultural work permits: Through the use of ILO core funding interventions had been pilot tested by ILO prior to the London Conference, including the innovative approach of working through agricultural cooperatives to facilitate work permit applications. This resulted in 12,396 (1,583 for women) permits being issued by the end of February 2017 under the FCO funded project. The work permits are in direct support to the Government's efforts to regulate the labour market and give workers the choice to work legally in the agricultural sector.

Access to work permits in the construction sector was supported through assisting 2,400 Syrian and 100 Jordanian workers to obtain the Certificate for Prior Learning (CPL). This is a first step in the process for workers to register as self-employed. An additional 2,450 Syrian refugee workers and 108 vulnerable Jordanian workers attended skills training.

A solid focus on supporting the work permit process was complemented by initiatives to support job matching, employment services and safer work places through setting up two employment offices, linking workers with farmers through the cooperatives, training 50 private sector companies in Occupational Safety and Health (OSH), and supporting MoL to update its database for Non-Jordanian (expatriate) workers.

A strength of ILO's approach has been its work through national institutions including the Ministry of Labour, the National Employment and Training Centre (NET), Centre of Accreditation and Quality Assurance (CAQA), Jordanian

Construction Contractors Association (JCCA), agricultural cooperatives and private sector companies.

Output 2: An improved regulatory framework will be implemented in a coherent manner across the governorates.

Combine advocacy and policy engagement: ILO is in a unique position to combine advocacy and policy engagement, with interventions on the ground in direct support of Syrian refugee workers and vulnerable Jordanian workers. This has allowed advocacy to be more grounded and has enabled engagement with MoL on a number of concrete actions in response to problems that arose.

This was reflected in a number of policy decisions taken by the Ministry of Labour:

- Linking work permits to Ministry of Interior ID cards instead of Syrian passports;
- Grace period for fees and no deportation of illegal workers to camps until April 2017;
- Work permits in the agricultural sector delinked from employers;
- Support for ILO's work to issue work permits through cooperatives in Mafraq and Irbid;
- Exemption of medical checks for Syrians holding an MOI card;
- Camp refugees allowed to work outside the camp when holding a work permit.

Output 3: 20 Joint Business Ventures (JBV) between Jordanians and Syrian refugees are established in the value chains of the two sectors.

The programme selected 20 JBVs (from 47 JBV proposals submitted) in a competitive process that took place in the second half of the programme. Further follow-up will be required to support the sustainability of the JBVs, provide technical and business development support, and provide gender disaggregated results data on the number of short-term jobs and long-term employment created for both Syrian refugees and Jordanian workers.

Efficiency of resource use

Overall, the project was cost-effective considering staffing and management costs. ILO took steps to decentralize responsibilities to the Jordan project office to enable quicker disbursement of funds. The approach of working through national institutions versus direct implementation by ILO-engaged staff is also an efficient way of ensuring national ownership. Cost allocation between different budget lines is sound but ILO in the future should set up a database on training providers that keeps track of quality and cost of training.

Recommendations

- 1. Connect policy to strengthen labour rights with operational interventions:** This is a unique strength of the ILO programme that should be maintained. By working with communities, concerns and demands can be raised at government level and a response by government facilitated.
- 2. Scaling up of interventions:** Scale up project interventions through regulatory frameworks and policy formulation by the MoL. This will strengthen local capacities and structures to take control of interventions and lead on innovative models that can be taken over by others, including links with the private sector.
- 3. A strategy exploring innovative approaches to develop employment opportunities** should complement the continued support to the Government of Jordan to formalize employment in the informal sector.
- 4. Engage with the private sector to implement employment generating pilot projects.** ILO should explore a number of pilot interventions based on good practices in the region for replication in Jordan.
- 5. Strengthen the approach of working through cooperatives.** Engagement with cooperatives should be part of an organizational approach including capacity building based on

ILO's "My COOP Guidance", application of ILO's Decent Work principles and support cooperative led community based economic opportunities generating employment in the area.

6. Access to Decent Work: Access to Decent Work makes the ILO position unique among others seeking to provide similar interventions. Facilitation of access to employment and decent work through the programme should be enhanced by a more systematic approach and documentation.

7. Sustainability strategy: Sustainability and exit strategies should be developed early on to ensure the programme works towards sustainable results.

8. Target groups: Be clear on what the programme aims to deliver for the different stakeholders which include Syrian refugees, host communities, camp residents, women and youth. Map the stakeholders in the different regions.

9. Programme coherence: The programme should aim for greater coherence and linkages between the different components and activities – this will produce stronger results. ILO's better work agenda should be integrated.

10. ILO Programme structure: Implementation should be supported by clear management and communication structures, and sufficient staffing to cover the needs of quality implementation on the ground. ILO processes between ILO Jordan office and ILO ROAS should be further strengthened to facilitate smooth implementation. The division of roles and responsibilities between the Regional Office for Arab States and the Jordan Office should be developed for each donor-funded programme. Division of roles and responsibilities at the design stage should also be made clearer between ROAS, Jordan Office, and PARDEV.

11. Implementation preparedness: To allow for efficient implementation, a work plan should be drawn up prior to the launch of key interventions, with input from the Regional Office and the Jordan project staff, covering technical

backstopping, identification of risks, sustainability strategy, policy advocacy, government links, etc.

12. Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy: The programme team should focus on monitoring and reporting results. The M&E strategy should be incorporated into the design document and a M&E plan developed during the inception phase with clear outcome statements supported by outputs and performance indicators, baseline data, gender disaggregated data, and data on the number of Jordanian and Syrian workers reached. While dedicated M&E staff should be recruited, M&E capacity building should be provided to the project team as a whole because M&E is a joint responsibility.

13. Contribute to the targets of the 3 RPR: The following data should be collected in the M&E strategy:

- # of individuals employed or self-employed – including short-term (cash for work and seasonal labour) and long-term employment
- # of individuals supported to access employment (training, internships, job placement and language courses)
- # of mixed groups supported in social cohesion initiatives (directly or indirectly)

14. Social cohesion: Interventions are implemented in a context of increased underlying tensions among often very vulnerable groups and communities. The programme should have a social agenda that addresses issues linked to marginalization through the creation of local structures or groups.